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SUPERVISOR RIDLEY-THOMAS CALLS FOR NEW SAFEGUARDS TO PROTECT \$7.9 MILLION EXPENDITURE FOR THE L.A. COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

LOS ANGELES — Stressing the importance of carefully monitoring and assessing the programs implemented as part of the County's Action Plan to address problems within the L.A. County Probation Department, Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today called for a report to ensure that the County's additional investment of \$7.9 million for programs and services will meet the terms of the Department's reform agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

The Board approved a recommendation to transfer the funding for nine months from the Provisional Financing uses to the Probation Department to partially implement the plan, in response to the October 31, 2008 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the DOJ. On July 30, the DOJ wrote a letter to the County stating it was not satisfied with the Probation Department's implementation of its recommended reforms.

Supervisor's Ridley-Thomas' motion calls for extra accountability to go along with the additional funding.

"Certain safeguards and precautions must be developed to ensure that these funds are spent in a manner designed to comply with the requirements set forth in the MOA with the Department of Justice," Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said.

The Supervisor referred to the recent report from the County's Auditor Controller, which indicated that the Probation Department could not fully account for its use of \$79 million set aside in 2008 for the DOJ Settlement and other program enhancements and could not completely account for all of the employees hired as part of the 2008 allocation of funds.

The Board directed the County Chief Executive Officer to work with the Chief Probation Officer and the Directors of Health Services and Mental Health to prepare a report on the matter and return in 30 days addressing the following:

- A timetable for the hiring of the staff by DMH, DHS and Probation.
- A plan for tracking the personnel hired to avoid the problems identified by the Auditor-Controller.
- A method for monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of the programs and personnel implemented.

"It's important that all of the personnel and the services for which these funds are designated are hired and the services implemented. It is also important to have management oversight to ensure that the new personnel are performing the functions as required in the Department of Justice's MOA," the Supervisor said.

The Supervisor's call for a DOJ investigation of the Probation Department has received support from both the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the National Urban League.

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